Things Left at the Crawford Doorstep

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Things Left at the Crawford Doorstep

by Anna_Hopkins

Summary

Jack didn't bring his work home. Other people brought work to him, much as he wished they wouldn't.

Notes

Thought of adding to my "Correspondence Gifts" series for once.

Even after she left his life, Jack still found things of Bella's in the house. A feather-light shawl, surprisingly warm, that he found in the winter closet a few months after her passing. Bottles of pills that he kept forgetting to throw out. A pressed flower she'd hidden in one of his books as a surprise.

The first time a letter had arrived in the mail with Bella's name on it, it had been junk mail from some company that hadn't updated its mailing lists yet. A magazine subscription. He held on to it for a few days, just to appreciate her name on the paper. When it happened again, he just gave the mail a once-over before throwing it out.

After six or seven months, he stopped receiving mislabeled letters, and settled into the idea of living alone with a resigned peace of mind.

Leave it to Lecter to take that from him as he'd taken so much else.

~

On Bella's birthday, he found a small bouquet laid on the doormat, tied with a golden ribbon. It was the same arrangement that "someone" had sent to Bella's wake. Cherry blossom and cypress branches -- *mourning the transience of life,* the funeral director had commented, *an interesting arrangement.* It offended Jack to see the flowers near Bella's coffin, at the time, and even now he crushed the bouquet in his fist and set it afire in the hearth.

Still, he was shaken. He'd forgotten Hannibal knew where he lived.

~

A few weeks later was Jack's own birthday; he got out of bed several hours later than he usually did and staggered over to the bathroom to wash up when he realized how late he'd slept in. It wasn't until he got back to the bedroom that he saw the inconspicuous giftbox on his nightstand: small, wrapped in blue-grey paper, with the same golden ribbon as the flowers had been in.

He opened it to find Bella's engagement ring, and a gold coin.

He'd buried her with that ring.

Jack was livid. He called the FBI and insisted they dust for prints on the whole house. Since it was Lecter, of course they did. But they found nothing.

~

A few days later, Will Graham disappeared.

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